

It's Not Your Fault by [radioactive_demolition](#)

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: F/F, M/M

Language: English

Characters: Dustin Henderson, Eleven (Stranger Things), Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Wheeler, Will Byers

Relationships: Eleven/Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Will Byers/Mike Wheeler

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Summary:

Mike remembers the quarry and what happened there. Will helps him rationalize his thoughts.

It's Not Your Fault

August, 1985

“Hey, Mike! Do you remember what El did to those sons of bitches back in 7th grade?” Dustin yelled to the group.

“You mean at the school meeting for Will?” Mike yelled back.

“No, I mean that was cool, but I meant what she did here at the quarry! Don’t you remember Mike? Do you remember, El?”

El looked up from Max, still linked arms.

“Do you mean when I broke one of their arms and shoved the other to the ground? Yeah, I remember. The mouthbreathers were bullying my friends. So I hurt them. Probably not the best idea, but it was the best I had.” El said, shrugging.

Max was still gazing at El. “Well, I think you did the right thing,” she said, and then leaned up and pecked her girlfriend on the cheek. El gazed back at her, stopping her strides with the rest of the group. Dustin, for the thousandth time, started to go on and explain the story of how El showed the bullies who was boss. Lucas tried to stop him, but to no avail.

Will, on the other hand, looked around for Mike. He had stopped several paces behind the party and looked really pale.

“Hey, Mike, you good? You wanna sit down?” he asked. Will tried to reach a hand out to Mike’s, but Mike jerked away.

“I-I just realized that I have, uh, homework to do. I gotta go, bye!” Mike stuttered and stumbled off into a run. Will was confused. It’s summer vacation, they didn’t have homework. He looked back at the party, and all but Dustin looked back at him, noticing what happened. He didn’t have any clue as to what just happened, but he was gonna find out.

Mike ran through the woods, not knowing where he was going. He was beating himself up over it. After all, it had been two years. Why

couldn't he get over it? Will had it together better than he did and Will had been through stuff 9000 times worse than this.

Eventually, he stopped running. He leaned against a tree and just let it all out. He started crying, head in his hands and knees up to his chest. Why was he so weak!?

Will stopped running. Oh, his mom was gonna kill him for running off on his own. All of the trees looked the damn same! How was he supposed to find his best friend? He heard something, so he got really quiet to hear what it was. Will jogged over to where the sound was and he found his nearly 6 foot tall friend huddled into a ball. He slowly reached out a hand.

"Mike?"

"Go away, Will," Mike sniffled.

"No. You stuck by my side when I was possessed, and you stuck with me through every petty panic attack. You told me once that if both of us were going crazy, we would go crazy together. I'm here for you; please, let me help," Will said, tearing up. Mike reached out his hand and he pulled Will down with him. Mike just latched onto Will's shirt and cried. Will comforted him until he was ready to speak.

"Thanks for staying, I-I don't know what I was thinking. I just-I remembered what happened the last time I was at the water. Well, the last two times. First was when they found what we thought was your body. I had lost all hope. I thought I lost my best friend from kindergarten forever. Then El channeled in to your voice from the Upside Down and I knew I could find you. I knew in that moment that I was wrong. Then it was Dustin and I trying to find you. We were chased by Tommy and Troy to where we just were. They cornered us. I felt trapped. I threw a rock at Tommy and missed. Troy grabbed Dustin and threatened to cut out all of his baby teeth. I protested, and the only alternative was me jumping off the edge. I-"

"Mike, its at least a 100 foot drop! You could've died!" Will exclaimed.

"I know, and I was right back there again. I felt lost. I felt like

nothing in the world could have given me hope. I didn't know if I would ever see you again. Dustin was telling me not to, that he didn't need his baby teeth, the dumbass," Mike said, chuckling half heartedly. "Troy started counting down from 5, and I didn't know what to do. He hit one and I stepped off the edge," Mike said before breaking down into tears again. Will just held him, incredulous.

'How the fuck did he survive??' Will wondered. When Mike composed himself, he continued.

"I stopped about halfway down, just floating in midair. El had saved me with her powers. She levitated me back up onto the ground and then she broke Troy's arm. I had almost lost everything, Will. I almost gave up on everything. I almost gave up on you, Will. How could I do that? How could I have thought that actually stepping off the edge would solve my problems?"

There was silence, which Will decided to fill.

"You felt lost, just like I did in the Upside Down. I was going to give up too, and just let Him have me, but the thought of losing my friends kept me alive long enough for my mom and Hopper to find me and resuscitate me. In that situation, it was a fight or flight response, and you couldn't fight. Your body took the only flight route it knew. It's not your fault, you're here now, don't worry," Will said, brushing his fingers through Mike's hair to calm him down.

Mike then said something through tears that Will couldn't understand.

"I missed what you just said, Mike," Will said gently, as to not agitate Mike.

"God, it doesn't even matter. It's wrong. I shouldn't love you, but I do and I was going to give up on that in an instant even though I made myself a promise to find you," Mike said, not realizing what he said. Will's heart skipped a beat. Could he really?

"Well, of course you love me, we've been friends since kindergarten," Will said, not sure what Mike meant or how he would respond.

"No, Will, I love you in a way that I shouldn't. I love you in the way that I loved Eleven." Mike said looking straight into Will's eyes. Will's eyes were wide with shock. The boy he's been crushing on since 3rd grade couldn't possibly have a crush on him, he just couldn't!

But Mike didn't know what Will was thinking. Mike was terrified. It was like he was back on the ledge.

"Oh god, oh fuck, oh shit I'm so sorry, I-I didn't mean to say that, oh my god, now you think I'm some kind of freak, oh god please just forget I said that," Mike said as he was scrambling to stand up to run away from his problems, like he always does. Will wasn't gonna let him do that. He stood up with Mike and held him to their spot.

"Will, please, just let me go, forget I ever said anything," Mike said, still trying to get away.

"No, Mike, I'm not gonna let you do that to yourself," Will said. Mike stopped struggling to get his hands away from Will. Mike was confused. Doesn't Will hate him for what he just confessed? How could he not?

Will didn't know what to do. He took Mike's face with one hand and leaned up and kissed him. Mike was surprised, but soon started kissing back. It was both of their dreams come true.

"How-how long?" was all Mike asked once they pulled away.

"Since, uh, 3rd grade?" Will shyly responded.

"God, I love you Will," Mike said in response.

"I love you too, Mike," Will said, looking at Mike like he put the stars in the sky.

They both gazed at each other for a while until they realized that their friends were probably worried as to where they ran off to. They took each others hands and walked back to the cliff, Mike completely fearless and Will ecstatic because they both had their perfect boy. Neither said anything later, but when they walked back into view, they totally saw Dustin and Lucas give Max and El \$10.